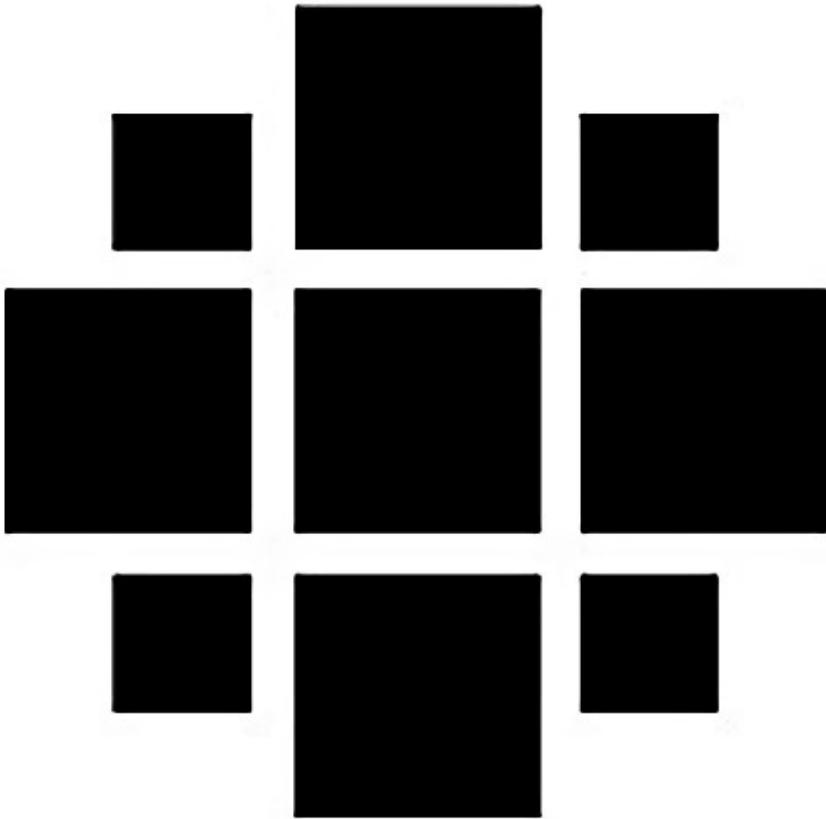


FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK
November 5, 2023



An open community united in love and justice

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Bobby Nguyen

Prière à Notre Dame by Léon Boëllmann

WELCOME

Lydia Mulkey

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Joanne Despotes

We come together in the presence of God to remember:

We remember the faithful saints,

Their labors for justice,

Their proclamations that challenge,

Their perseverance in times of struggle.

We come together in the presence of God to pause:

We pause to pay attention to our lives,

To listen to the wisdom within,

To be present to the lives of our neighbors and companions.

We come together in the presence of God to hope:

With hope, we seek to en flesh the promises of God,

Letting peace make its home in us,

Creating paths of restoration for all that is being destroyed,

Practicing love that uplifts and empowers.

Here we are, O God! May your Spirit move in this place.

*PASSING THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

*OPENING HYMN

Sanctuary Choir

I Sing a Song of the Saints of God (Black hymnal no. 295)

& Congregation

I sing a song of the saints of God, faithful their whole lives through,

who bravely labored, lived, and died for the God they loved and knew.

And one was a doctor, and one was a queen,

and another a shepherd in pastures green:

they were saints of God, if you know what I mean.

God, help me to be one, too.

**They loved their God and they lived that love. It was loving that made them strong.
They did what was right, for Jesus' sake, lived justly their whole lives long.
And one was a prophet, and one was a priest,
and another was slain by a fierce wild beast:
there is no earthly reason, none in the least,
why I shouldn't be one, too.**

**They lived not only in ages past, there are hundreds of thousands still.
The world is filled with living saints who choose to do God's will.
You can meet them in school, on the road, or at sea,
in a church, in a train, in a shop, or at tea:
for the saints are folk like you and like me,
and I mean to be one, too.**

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Joanne Despotes

Holy One, of past and future, of days and nights, of sinners and saints, of right and left, and everything between and beyond, we are grateful for Your presence that abides in every corner of our living. We do not always love as you would have us love. We do not always do as you would have us do. In our stubbornness, we turn from you when we should turn toward you. Yet, you lurk quietly in the loneliest places in our hearts, keeping watch. You grieve with us in our devastations, our losses, our fears. You journey with us in our celebrations, our defeats, and even in the monotony of our days. You are our God, and we are Your people. We praise you for the grace you shower upon us, constantly forgiving our mistakes, bad decisions, and errors in judgment, especially the ones that we share only with you. Write the stories of your people deep into our hearts. Give us hearts and minds and spirits ready to trust and follow wherever your Spirit leads, confident that you will not lead us beyond your loving embrace.

Time for Silent Prayer

ASSURANCE OF LOVE

Friends, hear this good news from Paul's letter to the church in Rome: "I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Thanks be to God! For God's mercy, grace, and love. Amen!

MUSICAL RESPONSE

Sanctuary Choir

I Will Not Leave You Comfortless by Everett Titcomb

I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you yet again:

Alleluia. And your heart shall be joyful, Alleluia.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

TIME FOR SHARING

Lydia Mulkey

*SONG OF ILLUMINATION

Sanctuary Choir

Evening Shade

The day is past and gone, the evening shades appear;

O may we all remember well, the night of death is near.

We lay our garments by, upon our beds to rest;

So death will soon disrobe us all of what we here possess.

And when our days are past, and we from time remove,

O may we in thy bosom rest, the bosom of thy love.

SCRIPTURE READING

Joanne Despotes

Select verses from Hebrews 11 & 12

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Alicia Reese

SERMON RESPONSE

Sanctuary Choir

Lux aeterna by Edwin Fissinger

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia
pius es.

Requiem aeternam dona eis,

Domine,

et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Requiescant in pace. Amen.

*May eternal light shine upon them, O
Lord,*

*in the company of your saints forever
and ever; for you are merciful.*

Rest eternal grant them, O Lord,

*and let perpetual light shine upon
them.*

May they rest in peace. Amen.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Lydia Mulkey

OFFERTORY

Sanctuary Choir

Lux aeterna from *Requiem* by John Rutter

Carol Porfilio, soloist

I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours: even so saith the Spirit, for they rest.

Lux aeterna luceat eis Domine: cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine: et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Let everlasting light shine on them, O Lord, with your saints forever: for you are merciful.

Eternal rest grant them, O Lord: and let perpetual light shine upon them.

ALL SAINTS' REMEMBRANCE OPENING PRAYER

God of all creation . . . who have spoken to our hearts and touched us with your fire. For all the saints who live beside us, whose weaknesses and strengths are woven with our own,

we praise you, O God.

For all the saints who live beyond us, who challenge us to change the world with them,

we praise you, O God.

For those dear souls most precious to us, for their witness to your love and their commitment to your justice, for their trust in your mercy regardless of the circumstance,

we give you thanks and praise.

Living God, we thank you for the gift of life eternal, and for all those who having served you well, now rest from their labors.

Amen.

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow
(Old Hundredth)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ, all people here below;

Praise Holy Spirit evermore;

Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

SPEAKING THE NAMES OF OUR BELOVED DEAD & CANDLE LIGHTING

GOING FORTH IN DEDICATION AND SERVICE

BLESSING AND AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Alicia Reese

What is your only comfort in life and in death?

**That I am not my own,
but belong body and soul to God.**

We trust in God, the creator,

**whom Jesus called Abba,
who created the world good and us in their image.**

We trust in Jesus Christ, the redeemer,

**fully human, fully divine,
the way the truth and the life.**

We trust the Holy Spirit, the sustainer,

**who binds us together as the body of Christ,
with believers of every time and place.**

We believe in the triune God:

Who welcomes our laughter

And moves us to wonder...

Who welcomes our questions

And loves us to trust...

Who welcomes our doubts

And loves us to faith.

This we believe. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN

For All the Saints (Black hymnal no. 299)

**For all the saints who from their labors rest,
who to the world their steadfast faith confessed,
your name, O Jesus, be forever blessed. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Sanctuary Choir
& Congregation

You were their rock, their refuge, and their might:

you, Christ, the hope that put their fears to flight;

'mid gloom and doubt, you were their one true light. Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Still may your people, faithful, true, and bold,
live as the saints who nobly fought of old,
and share with them a glorious crown of gold. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Ringed by this cloud of witnesses divine,
we feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
yet in your love our faithful lives entwine. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
then hearts are brave again and faith grows strong. Alleluia! Alleluia !**

POSTLUDE

Hymne d'action de grâces by Jean Langlais

Bobby Nguyen

WELCOME TO FIRST UNITED!

We are a union church of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Church of Christ. We seek to be an inclusive expression of Christ's body celebrating our diversity while finding our unity in Christ. We are a More Light/Open and Affirming congregation, committed to full inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in membership & ministry.

LEARNING MORE ABOUT FIRST UNITED

Interested in learning more about First United Church? Look for members wearing gold buttons, talk to Pastor Lydia, or join us for a Newcomers class held three times per year. Next class to be held late winter or early spring.

ADULT EDUCATION

Faith formation doesn't end after Church School. Adult Education takes a variety of forms, from small, group Bible studies to Sunday morning Speaker Series. Weekly Bible study and Speaker Series meet during Sunday education hour at 9:45 a.m.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP & OUR NURSERY

We love to have children in worship! Age-appropriate worship activities and books are available as you enter the sanctuary. We also offer safe, quality childcare and quiet play for children five and under in our nursery. Ask an usher for directions.

CHURCH SCHOOL

Church School is for children ages birth through 8th grade. Meeting Sundays at 9:45 a.m., September through mid-May, we tell stories of the Bible using a lens of love and justice with singing, praying, and creating. Contact Lydia Mulkey (lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com) to learn more.

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Are you interested in singing in worship with our Sanctuary Choir? Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., September through May. For more information contact Bill Chin (bill@firstunitedoakpark.com).

YOUTH PROGRAMS – FUJI (JR. HIGH) & FUSH (SR. HIGH)

The youth groups meet on Sunday evenings from 5 – 7 p.m. here at the church, September through mid-May. Contact Alicia Reese (areese@firstunitedoakpark.com) for more information.



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www.firstunitedoakpark.com | facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark

Associate Pastor Lydia Mulkey – lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com

Associate Pastor Alicia Reese – areese@firstunitedoakpark.com